

**REPORT OF THE AUDIT OF THE  
BELL COUNTY  
SHERIFF'S SETTLEMENT - 2014 GAS AND OIL TAXES**

**For The Period  
January 01, 2015 Through June 15, 2015**



**MIKE HARMON  
AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS  
[www.auditor.ky.gov](http://www.auditor.ky.gov)**

**209 ST. CLAIR STREET  
FRANKFORT, KY 40601-1817  
TELEPHONE (502) 564-5841  
FACSIMILE (502) 564-2912**



**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**  
**AUDIT OF THE**  
**BELL COUNTY**  
**SHERIFF'S SETTLEMENT - 2014 GAS AND OIL TAXES**

**For The Period**  
**January 01, 2015 Through June 15, 2015**

The Auditor of Public Accounts has completed the audit of the Sheriff's Settlement - 2014 Gas and Oil Taxes for the Bell County Sheriff for the period January 01, 2015 through June 15, 2015. We have issued an unmodified opinion on the financial statement taken as a whole. Based upon the audit work performed, the financial statement is presented fairly in all material respects.

**Financial Condition:**

The Sheriff collected 2014 Gas and Oil taxes of \$378,937 for the districts, retaining commissions of \$13,362 to operate the Sheriff's office. The Sheriff distributed 2014 Gas and Oil taxes of \$365,564 to the districts. Taxes of \$29 are due to the districts from the Sheriff and refunds of \$18 are due to the Sheriff from the taxing districts.

**Report Comments:**

2014-001 The Sheriff Did Not Segregate The Duties Of His Office  
2014-002 The Sheriff Did Not Have A Written Agreement To Protect Deposits

**Deposits:**

The Sheriff's deposits as of February 11, 2015 were exposed to custodial credit risk as follows:

- Uncollateralized and Uninsured \$1,238,967



## CONTENTS

PAGE

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT .....	1
SHERIFF'S SETTLEMENT – 2014 GAS AND OIL TAXES .....	4
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENT .....	5
REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL OVER FINANCIAL REPORTING AND ON COMPLIANCE AND OTHER MATTERS BASED ON AN AUDIT OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT PERFORMED IN ACCORDANCE WITH GOVERNMENT AUDITING STANDARDS .....	9
COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	13





**MIKE HARMON**  
**AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS**

To the People of Kentucky

Honorable Matthew G. Bevin, Governor  
William M. Landrum III, Secretary  
Finance and Administration Cabinet  
Honorable Albey Brock, Bell County Judge/Executive  
Honorable Mitch Williams, Bell County Sheriff  
Members of the Bell County Fiscal Court

Independent Auditor's Report

**Report on the Financial Statement**

We have audited the Bell County Sheriff's Settlement - 2014 Gas and Oil Taxes for the period January 01, 2015 through June 15, 2015 - Regulatory Basis, and the related notes to the financial statement.

**Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statement**

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statement in accordance with accounting practices prescribed or permitted by the laws of Kentucky to demonstrate compliance with the Commonwealth of Kentucky's regulatory basis of accounting as described in Note 1. Management is also responsible for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of a financial statement that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

**Auditor's Responsibility**

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial statement based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, and the *Audit Guide for Sheriff's Tax Settlements* issued by the Auditor of Public Accounts, Commonwealth of Kentucky. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statement is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statement. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statement, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statement in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statement. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.



To the People of Kentucky

Honorable Matthew G. Bevin, Governor

William M. Landrum III, Secretary

Finance and Administration Cabinet

Honorable Albey Brock, Bell County Judge/Executive

Honorable Mitch Williams, Bell County Sheriff

Members of the Bell County Fiscal Court

### **Basis for Adverse Opinion on U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles**

As described in Note 1 of the financial statement, the financial statement is prepared by the County Sheriff on the basis of the accounting practices prescribed or permitted by the laws of Kentucky to demonstrate compliance with the Commonwealth of Kentucky's regulatory basis of accounting, which is a basis of accounting other than accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

The effects on the financial statement of the variances between the regulatory basis of accounting described in Note 1 and accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, although not reasonably determinable, are presumed to be material.

### **Adverse Opinion on U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles**

In our opinion, because of the significance of the matter discussed in the Basis for Adverse Opinion on U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles paragraph, the financial statement referred to above does not present fairly, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, the financial position of each fund of the County Sheriff, as of June 15, 2015, or changes in financial position or cash flows thereof for the year then ended.

### **Opinion on Regulatory Basis of Accounting**

In our opinion, the financial statement referred to above presents fairly, in all material respects, the taxes charged, credited, and paid for the period January 01, 2015 through June 15, 2015 of the Bell County Sheriff, in accordance with the basis of accounting practices prescribed or permitted by the Commonwealth of Kentucky as described in Note 1.

### **Other Reporting Required by Government Auditing Standards**

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued our report dated December 03, 2015 on our consideration of the Bell County Sheriff's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts and grant agreements, and other matters. The purpose of that report is to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the Bell County Sheriff's internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering the Bell County Sheriff's internal control over financial reporting and compliance.



To the People of Kentucky

Honorable Matthew G. Bevin, Governor

William M. Landrum III, Secretary

Finance and Administration Cabinet

Honorable Albey Brock, Bell County Judge/Executive

Honorable Mitch Williams, Bell County Sheriff

Members of the Bell County Fiscal Court

**Other Reporting Required by Government Auditing Standards (Continued)**

Based on the results of our audit, we have presented the accompanying comments and recommendations, included herein, which discusses the following report comments:

2014-001 The Sheriff Did Not Segregate The Duties Of His Office

2014-002 The Sheriff Did Not Have A Written Agreement To Protect Deposits

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Harmon", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Mike Harmon

Auditor of Public Accounts

December 03, 2015

BELL COUNTY  
MITCH WILLIAMS, SHERIFF  
SHERIFF'S SETTLEMENT - 2014 GAS AND OIL TAXES

For The Period January 01, 2015 Through June 15, 2015

<u>Charges</u>	<u>County Taxes</u>	<u>Special Taxing Districts</u>	<u>School Taxes</u>	<u>State Taxes</u>
Gas Property Taxes	\$ 26,284	\$ 40,705	\$ 131,189	\$ 28,377
Oil Property Taxes	18,323	28,376	91,454	19,782
Penalties	216	333	1,076	232
Gross Chargeable to Sheriff	<u>44,823</u>	<u>69,414</u>	<u>223,719</u>	<u>48,391</u>
<u>Credits</u>				
Discounts	745	1,114	3,716	804
Delinquents	<u>120</u>	<u>185</u>	<u>597</u>	<u>129</u>
Total Credits	<u>865</u>	<u>1,299</u>	<u>4,313</u>	<u>933</u>
Taxes Collected	43,958	68,115	219,406	47,458
Less: Commissions *	<u>1,868</u>	<u>2,895</u>	<u>6,582</u>	<u>2,017</u>
Taxes Due	42,090	65,220	212,824	45,441
Taxes Paid	<u>42,108</u>	<u>65,220</u>	<u>212,795</u>	<u>45,441</u>
Due District or (Refund Due Sheriff) as of Completion of Audit	<u>\$ (18)</u>	<u>\$ 0</u>	<u>\$ 29</u>	<u>\$ 0</u>

\* Commissions:

4.25% on \$ 159,531  
3% on \$ 219,406

The accompanying notes are an integral part of this financial statement.

BELL COUNTY  
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENT

June 15, 2015

Note 1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

A. Fund Accounting

The Sheriff's office tax collection duties are limited to acting as an agent for assessed property owners and taxing districts. A fund is used to account for the collection and distribution of taxes. A fund is a separate accounting entity with a self-balancing set of accounts. Fund accounting is designed to demonstrate legal compliance and to aid financial management by segregating transactions related to certain government functions or activities.

B. Basis of Accounting

The financial statement has been prepared on a regulatory basis of accounting, which demonstrates compliance with the laws of Kentucky and is a special purpose framework. Basis of accounting refers to when charges, credits, and taxes paid are reported in the settlement statement. It relates to the timing of measurements regardless of the measurement focus.

Charges are sources of revenue which are recognized in the tax period in which they become available and measurable. Credits are reductions of revenue which are recognized when there is proper authorization. Taxes paid are uses of revenue which are recognized when distributions are made to the taxing districts and others.

C. Cash and Investments

KRS 66.480 authorizes the Sheriff's office to invest in the following, including but not limited to, obligations of the United States and of its agencies and instrumentalities, obligations and contracts for future delivery or purchase of obligations backed by the full faith and credit of the United States, obligations of any corporation of the United States government, bonds or certificates of indebtedness of this state, and certificates of deposit issued by or other interest-bearing accounts of any bank or savings and loan institution which are insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) or which are collateralized, to the extent uninsured, by any obligation permitted by KRS 41.240(4).

Note 2. Deposits

The Bell County Sheriff maintained deposits of public funds with depository institutions insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) as required by KRS 66.480(1)(d). According to KRS 41.240(4), the depository institution should pledge or provide sufficient collateral which, together with FDIC insurance, equals or exceeds the amount of public funds on deposit at all times. In order to be valid against the FDIC in the event of failure or insolvency of the depository institution, this pledge or provision of collateral should be evidenced by an agreement between the Sheriff and the depository institution, signed by both parties, that is (a) in writing, (b) approved by the board of directors of the depository institution or its loan committee, which approval must be reflected in the minutes of the board or committee, and (c) an official record of the depository institution. These requirements were not met, as the Sheriff did not have a written agreement with the bank.

BELL COUNTY  
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENT  
June 15, 2015  
(Continued)

Note 2. Deposits (Continued)

Custodial Credit Risk - Deposits

Custodial credit risk is the risk that in the event of a depository institution failure, the Sheriff's deposits may not be returned. The Bell County Sheriff does not have a deposit policy for custodial credit risk but rather follows the requirements of KRS 41.240(4). On February 11, 2015, the Sheriff's bank balance was exposed to custodial credit risk as follows:

- Uncollateralized and Uninsured      \$1,238,967

Note 3. Tax Collection Period

The Gas and Oil property tax assessments were levied as of January 1, 2014. Property taxes were billed to finance governmental services for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2015. Liens are effective when the tax bills become delinquent. The collection period for these assessments was January 6, 2015 through June 15, 2015.

Note 4. Interest Income

The Bell County Sheriff earned \$373 as interest income on 2014 Gas and Oil taxes.

Note 5. Sheriff's 10% Add-On Fee

The Bell County Sheriff collected \$724 of 10% add-on fees allowed by KRS 134.119(7). As of December 3, 2015, the Sheriff owed \$50 in 10% add-on fees to his fee account.

REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL OVER FINANCIAL REPORTING AND  
ON COMPLIANCE AND OTHER MATTERS BASED ON AN AUDIT OF THE FINANCIAL  
STATEMENT PERFORMED IN ACCORDANCE WITH GOVERNMENT AUDITING STANDARDS





**MIKE HARMON**  
**AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS**

The Honorable Albey Brock, Bell County Judge/Executive  
Honorable Mitch Williams, Bell County Sheriff  
Members of the Bell County Fiscal Court

**Report On Internal Control Over Financial Reporting And On  
Compliance And Other Matters Based On An Audit Of The Financial  
Statement Performed In Accordance With Government Auditing Standards**

**Independent Auditor's Report**

We have audited, in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, the Bell County Sheriff's Settlement - Gas and Oil Taxes for the period January 01, 2015 through June 15, 2015 - Regulatory Basis and the related notes to the financial statement and have issued our report thereon dated December 03, 2015. The County Sheriff's financial statement is prepared on a regulatory basis of accounting, which demonstrates compliance with the laws of Kentucky and is a special purpose framework.

**Internal Control Over Financial Reporting**

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statement, we considered the Bell County Sheriff's internal control over financial reporting (internal control) to determine the audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the financial statement, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Bell County Sheriff's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of the Bell County Sheriff's internal control over financial reporting.

Our consideration of internal control over financial reporting was for the limited purpose described in the preceding paragraph and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control over financial reporting that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies and therefore, material weaknesses or significant deficiencies may exist that were not identified. However, as described in the accompanying comments and recommendations, we identified a certain deficiency in internal control that we consider to be a material weakness.

A *deficiency in internal control* exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct misstatements on a timely basis. A *material weakness* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control, such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the entity's financial statement will not be prevented, or detected and corrected on a timely basis. We consider the deficiency described in the accompanying comments and recommendations as item 2014-001 to be a material weakness.



Report On Internal Control Over Financial Reporting And On  
Compliance And Other Matters Based On An Audit Of The Financial  
Statement Performed In Accordance With Government Auditing Standards  
(Continued)

### **Compliance And Other Matters**

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the Bell County Sheriff's financial statement is free of material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the determination of financial statement amounts. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit and, accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. The results of our tests disclosed an instance of noncompliance or other matters that is required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards* and which is described in the accompanying comments and recommendations as item 2014-002.

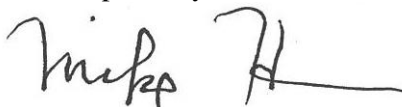
### **Sheriff's Responses to Findings**

The Bell County Sheriff's responses to the findings identified in our audit are described in the accompanying comments and recommendations. The Sheriff's responses were not subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the financial statement and, accordingly, we express no opinion on them.

### **Purpose of this Report**

The purpose of this report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control or on compliance. This report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering the entity's internal control and compliance. Accordingly, this communication is not suitable for any other purpose.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Harmon", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mike Harmon  
Auditor of Public Accounts

December 03, 2015



## COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



BELL COUNTY  
MITCH WILLIAMS, SHERIFF  
COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

For The Period January 01, 2015 Through June 15, 2015

INTERNAL CONTROL - MATERIAL WEAKNESS:

2014-001 The Sheriff Did Not Segregate The Duties Of His Office

---

The Sheriff's Office lacks adequate segregation of duties over receipts and disbursements. One employee's duties included accepting tax payments, recording taxes paid, preparing monthly tax reports, and reconciling the bank account with limited activities. The Sheriff did not allocate these duties nor did he implement compensating controls to mitigate the effects of the lack of segregated duties. In order to achieve a proper segregation of duties, related activities should be assigned to different individuals or compensating controls should be implemented to offset the lack of adequate segregation of duties. We recommend the following segregation of duties or compensating controls be implemented to offset this internal control weakness.

- The Sheriff should rotate the employee responsible for entering paid tax bills in the computer. The employee responsible for entering this information could be randomly determined without the employee's prior knowledge.
- The Sheriff should compare monthly tax reports and disbursements to a deposit listing. Any differences should be reconciled. The Sheriff could document this by initializing the listing of deposits.
- The Sheriff should require an employee that does not accept tax payments to prepare the bank reconciliation. The Sheriff should compare the bank reconciliation to the balance in the checkbook and any differences should be reconciled. The Sheriff could document this by initializing the bank reconciliation and the balance in the checkbook.

*Sheriff's Response: We will attempt to put controls in place to compensate for the lack of segregation of duties.*

BELL COUNTY  
MITCH WILLIAMS, SHERIFF  
COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS  
For The Period January 01, 2015 Through June 15, 2015  
(Continued)

STATE LAWS AND REGULATIONS:

2014-002 The Sheriff Did Not Have A Written Agreement To Protect Deposits

---

The Sheriff had a written agreement that was entered into on August 25, 2015, however as of February 11, 2015, the Sheriff's deposits of public funds were uninsured and unsecured in the amount of \$1,238,967. The Sheriff did not have a collateral security agreement in place during the audit period and the bank failed to adequately pledge enough securities to cover the Sheriff's deposits. The Sheriff's lack of segregation of duties caused the uninsured deposits to remain an oversight. According to KRS 66.480(1)(d) and KRS 41.240(4), financial institutions maintaining deposits of public funds are required to pledge securities or provide surety bonds as collateral to secure these deposits if the amounts on deposit exceed the \$250,000 amount of insurance coverage provided by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC).

The Sheriff should require the depository institution to pledge or provide collateral in an amount sufficient to secure deposits of public funds at all times. We also recommend the Sheriff enter into a written agreement with the depository institution to secure the Sheriff's interest in the collateral pledged or provided by the depository institution. According to federal law, 12 U.S.C.A. § 1823(e), this agreement, in order to be recognized as valid by the FDIC, should be (a) in writing, (b) approved by the board of directors of the depository institution or its loan committee, which approval must be reflected in the minutes of the board or committee, and (c) an official record of the depository institution.

*Sheriff's Response: We will work with the bank to ensure securities are pledged and we have a written security agreement in place.*

